

Harper Center Bulletin

Williamstown Council
on Aging

The Harper Center

118 Church Street

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Operational Hours; M-
F, 8:00-4:00 and Sunday
at 11:00 for lunch

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Bulletin #229

December 2013 Newsletter

Winter's in the air. Sometimes when you go out there in the morning, you can almost smell snow coming. Do you know what I mean? There's a crispness out there almost shouting "Here I come"! The snow man returns. Well, as they say, 'tis the season, right?

All right then, a couple housekeeping notes for the month lest I forget. There isn't a Tai Chi class on Monday December 2 as we'll be making green Christmas ornaments with the Garden Club, see below, and there will be no Bridge on Wednesday December 11- there is a meeting for the residents of Proprietors field to talk with Berkshire Housing about the new development being created in the West woods out back. The public general session is the same day at 7:00 across the street in the Elementary School if you're interested. The Reading Buddy Holiday Party is slated for 11:00 on December 11 and a bunch -o- people are going to the Boars Head luncheon at the Williams Inn on Friday the 6th. Have I missed anything? Happy Holidays all!



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Garden Club Green

The Garden Club of Williamstown will be here on the afternoon of December 2nd to conduct their annual Holiday Green workshop for individuals interested in creating a beautiful ornament. The program begins at 1:00 and you're guaranteed to go home with a fabulous ornament for your home, or perhaps to give as a gift to another. I must confess that I have never made an ornament from fresh tree boughs, for example, other than to hang them on the front door or to drape over the fence in front of my house. I am not that creative and lack imagination when it comes to these decorations. The beauty and simplicity of it all amazes me. I appreciate the thought and creativity which goes into these works of art...how about you?



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Hospital update



There has been a lot of news about our local hospital and Northern Berkshire Health in general in the past couple years. Just when you think it's going to be quiet, we get more news to talk about. The papers talk of successful restructuring and positive money flow and then we hear that the hospital will close the Greylock Pavilion. Some folks have expressed a bit of confusion—and wonder what's up with this.

Marion and I were off to a breakfast event at Sweetbrook a couple weeks ago and heard our friend Paul Hopkins talking about the issue. He's not been over in awhile and given the recent buzz, we asked him to that he come over and talk to us about the hospital and what's happening with health care in general. . He'll be here at Harper on December 3 at 12:30 to tell us what's up on the hill. We'll have open faced Roast Beef or Turkey sandwiches with sides first at noon. Join us!

Sweets from Sweetbrook

On Thursday December 5th we'll be introducing a new player in the neighborhood. Christina Lenfast recently started at Sweetbrook as a nurse liaison to the community. Sweetbrook has gone thru some changes in recent years. Ownership has changed and new owners have come to town, we heard all sorts of stories about what is happening over there and rumors have literally flown about town. How about some clarity?

Christina will be here with a couple other people from the 'brook including the new Administrator-and I'm sorry, she is just starting as this is written so I have no name. They'll be here to talk with us at 1:00 that afternoon and will bring some sweet treats with them. Yum!

Java Judy in the House

The Java girl will be here at Harper on Wednesday morning, December 11 at 8:30, bringing some tips to beat the holiday blues. We're not talking BB King Blues here, this is about those blahs rearing their heads around the holidays. Let's face it, Holidays can be a tough time for some folks. As we go thru the year, we sometimes acquire losses or at the very least, we have friends who do. Loss is indiscriminate, it doesn't matter whether it's Uncle Joe, Spot the dog or these days, a job. Loss is loss. And they can be tough to deal with, especially at holiday time. Judy will be bringing Colleen Nurney, Social Work director at Williamstown Commons with her to talk with us about coping strategies to beat those blues. Of course we'll have food first. Pancakes ?



Don't fall!

Falling is the leading cause of broken bones, pain, suffering, hospitalizations, avoidable nursing home stays, and so on. We all know someone who has fallen or perhaps have fallen ourselves. "Step it Up" is a fall prevention program offered through the VNA and Hospice of Northern Berkshire and Home Instead Senior Care. The program is designed for seniors or caregivers who are worried that someone may be at risk of falling.

Physical and Occupational therapists from the VNA and the hospital are coming to Harper on Tuesday December 17 to talk with us about falls and avoiding them. They'll offer a few basic exercise to build strength and avoid a disaster. They'll also provide, for free, a personal falls risk assessment for anyone who's interested. Something to share with your doctor....

Anyway, lunch at noon, we'll do burgers and dogs from the barbie!



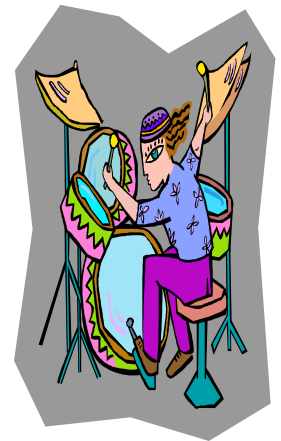
The Great American Songbook

We all know there guys, they've been here several times before. They bring music with a pop and, well actually I think the first time they came thru here was about 2003. Am I right?

So on Thursday December 12th, drummer Richard Meyer and his band of extraordinary musicians will be right here at Harper serenading us with a fabulous medley of musical classics and some traditional holiday tunes! They'll commence playing at 12:30 and you bet we'll have appropriate refreshments!

So join us and we'll enjoy a bit of serious holiday cheer!

And while I'm at it, sincere thanks to our friend Ida Patella from Berkshire Housing for the arrangements!



Yoga

We added a new option to our health and fitness repertoire last month. "Gentle Yoga", a weekly class, facilitated by Williamstown yoga practitioner Mary Edgerton, is designed especially for seniors and welcomes those who are new to yoga or those who have practiced yoga in the past but want a gentler practice. Yoga's gentle flowing movements linked to breathing encourage strengthening and toning of limbs-as well as greater flexibility. This class will allow participants to work from traditional standing poses or from a chair. Nope, we won't require you to stand on your head-you'll safely explore yoga postures, balance and breath. The class is open to all and there are no participation fees. Join us! Monday mornings, 9:00 to 10:00.



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Our friend Kira will be here at Harper on December 19 , hosting a program on making gingerbread houses and Christmas cookies. I love food programs and around this time of year I love ginger bread! You know what the problem with ginger bread houses are don't you? Half the time the owner thinks that they are for display purposes and not to eat. So after the holidays what do we have? A bunch of stale ginger bread houses and people to be tossed out! Or worse-they're placed in the freezer for use "next year" and we end up with gingerbread houses occupying space in the freezer until we finally come to our senses and clean house...Don't do this to them they're meant to be eaten! I digress...Kira will be here at 1:00. This will be cool.

Now a few of you have asked us whether there will be a flu shot clinic this year and in fact, there will. The VNA and Hospice of Northern Berkshire will be in the house on December 20th, from 2-4 to inoculate interested peeps against the flu. This time we'll be asking for folks who are interested and haven't yet gotten theirs to let us know if they're participating. It's helpful as it will tell them how many doses they need to bring with them. Call or stop in with questions!

Just a note to let everyone know that we will be conducting a senior survey beginning early next year. We just want to know what folks feel are needed or wanted over here. Nobody will call, but if someone hands you a piece of paper and pencil, please take time to fill it out!



Page four news and notes

Serena Merrill, our foot care provider will be here at the Harper Center on Tuesday, December 17th to clip those toenails and rub those aching feet. That's the good news. The bad news is that there's one appointment left open for the month. She's accepting appointments for her next trip through town on January 21, 2014. Want to see her? Schedule now folks, her spaces fill fast!

SHINE Counselor Peg Jenks will be here at the Harper Center on Wednesday, December 18th at 10:30 to help anyone who has issues with their health care insurance. Appointments are appreciated. Peg is also available for individual consultations at other times by scheduling her through the COA office at 458-8250.

The monthly Blood Pressure for December is postponed. It will resume immediately preceding the Friendship Club meeting at noon on January 14th next year...

Finally, the December Brown Bag offering—sponsored by our friends from the Foodbank of Western Massachusetts—will be on Friday December 27th. Brown Bag is a monthly offering of shelf stable foods and fruits and veggies in season. Interested in the details? Call us here at Harper, 458-8250 and we'll be happy to help!